



**Royal
Osteoporosis
Society**

Better bone health for everybody

Royal Osteoporosis Society (ROS) osteoporosis risk checker – frequently asked questions

What is the osteoporosis risk checker?

The osteoporosis risk checker is an online tool to help you consider your bone health and risk of osteoporosis.

The short survey will tell you if you have key risk factors for osteoporosis. It takes just five minutes to complete and will provide you with a personalised report on your bone health. The osteoporosis risk checker and follow up email series will also provide practical tips on how to take action on your bone health. By understanding your individual risk of developing osteoporosis, you can take action to protect your bone health and if needed, start a conversation with your GP.

Visit theros.org.uk/risk-checker to start the osteoporosis risk checker now.

Why should I care about my bone health?

1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men over 50 will break a bone due to poor bone health. But it doesn't need to be like this – osteoporosis is treatable and fractures largely preventable.

Who is the osteoporosis risk checker for?

Anyone can use the osteoporosis risk checker however it is not designed for people who have already been diagnosed with osteoporosis or have had their bone health assessed by a healthcare professional.

If you've already been diagnosed with osteoporosis, we would like your help to spread the word and encourage others to check their risk – friends, family, colleagues and neighbours!

The web address for the osteoporosis risk checker is: theros.org.uk/risk-checker

We've also developed a webpage to easily share the risk checker:
<https://theros.org.uk/risk-checker-share/>

To do this online, it's as simple as sharing the link with others or following us on social media (@RoyalOsteoSoc) and sharing our posts about the osteoporosis risk checker.

How was the osteoporosis risk checker developed?

The content for the tool was developed by expert clinical colleagues from across the ROS. It was reviewed by volunteers with lived experience of osteoporosis

and by the organisation's Clinical Committee. The tool itself was then tested by existing volunteers, staff and new audiences.

The osteoporosis risk checker is intended to raise awareness of factors that are known to increase the risk of developing osteoporosis and broken bones. It is not a diagnostic tool, only a healthcare professional can diagnose osteoporosis and predict your risk of breaking a bone.

What types of results can people get?

The answers you provide will determine your results and recommendations.

There are three broad results:

- People with answers that show they have key risk factors for osteoporosis (e.g., women under 50 with an early menopause or people taking oral steroids or drug treatments for breast or prostate cancer) who have not already had an osteoporosis assessment or are on osteoporosis medication, are encouraged to take action by making an appointment with their GP to start a conversation about their bone health.
- People with answers that show they have some risk factors for osteoporosis are encouraged to discuss their personalised results the next time they speak with their GP.
- People with answers that show they don't currently have any of the main risk factors are told that this is the case.

Everybody is encouraged to consider making positive lifestyle choices including eating a balanced diet with calcium, taking vitamin D as recommended, and exercising regularly to help keep their bones strong and healthy.

And everyone will be made aware that they may develop new risk factors in the future (especially if you develop new medical problems, start taking new medication or if you break a bone).

My results say I have key risk factors, does that mean I have osteoporosis?

The osteoporosis risk checker is not a diagnostic tool, only a healthcare professional can diagnose osteoporosis and predict your risk of breaking a bone. The report generated is based on the information you provide, so may be open to interpretation. It might indicate you are at higher or lower risk of developing osteoporosis, but that doesn't mean you definitely will or won't develop the condition.

Please always talk to a healthcare professional to discuss your bone health.

I think my results are wrong.

The osteoporosis risk checker is intended to raise awareness of factors that are known to increase the risk of developing osteoporosis and broken bones. It is not a diagnostic tool, only a healthcare professional can diagnose osteoporosis and predict your risk of breaking a bone.

The algorithms behind the tool - which answer options generate which results - are based on clinical guidelines and consensus and were informed and agreed by

clinical experts. Results will depend on what information you enter, and are an indication of your level of risk, not a diagnosis.

Please always talk to a healthcare professional to discuss your bone health.

I have osteoporosis/low bone density, but my results say that I don't have any key risk factors?

The osteoporosis risk checker is not designed for people who have already been diagnosed with osteoporosis or have had their bone health assessed by a healthcare professional.

The osteoporosis risk checker is intended to raise awareness of factors that are known to increase the risk of developing osteoporosis and broken bones. It is not a diagnostic tool, only a healthcare professional can diagnose osteoporosis and predict your risk of breaking a bone.

Please always talk to a healthcare professional to discuss your bone health.

I think I might have osteoporosis. What should I do?

If you're worried about your bone health and think you might be at risk of osteoporosis and broken bones, it's important to talk to your GP. They can assess your bone health and talk to you about helpful lifestyle changes. They can also talk to you about bone-strengthening drug treatments, if you need one, or refer you for further tests.

For more information about bone health, visit our website at theros.org.uk

I don't understand my results.

For more information about bone health, visit our website at theros.org.uk

I've made an appointment with my GP but I don't know what to say?

Why not print out your personalised report and take it with you to start a conversation and check out our '[Talking to your GP about your bone health](#)' resources.

I've tried to complete the osteoporosis risk checker but the tool isn't working on my device.

The osteoporosis risk checker may not be supported by some operating systems. If you're able to, try to complete it on another device.

How do I get a personalised report?

After completing the osteoporosis risk checker, your results will be displayed at the top of the final web page. You will also have the opportunity to enter your email address to receive an email with a printable copy of your personalised report (PDF). Depending on the recommendation, you may wish to save and/or print off your report to discuss with a healthcare professional.

What happens after I've used the osteoporosis risk checker?

If you provided your email address on the final web page, you will receive an email with a printable copy of your personalised report.

Four weeks later you will receive a follow up email with further information and support on the Royal Osteoporosis Society website.

Three weeks after that, you will receive a final email with a survey to understand more about any actions you've taken since completing the osteoporosis risk checker.

In these emails, we will encourage you to sign up to receive regular updates. You can unsubscribe from the risk checker email series and opt out of receiving these communications at any time by emailing riskchecker@theros.org.uk

How will my data be used?

We will use the information you provide when completing the osteoporosis risk checker to provide an indication of your level of risk of developing osteoporosis. If you provide us with an email address during this process, we will send you your personalised report along with follow up information about keeping your bones healthy.

You can unsubscribe from the risk checker email series and opt out of receiving these communications at any time by emailing riskchecker@theros.org.uk. We will also use the anonymised results to further our charitable purposes by, for example, producing statistics based on the responses provided. When we do this, we will ensure that you will not be identifiable from the information that we use.

Find out more in our privacy policy here: theros.org.uk/policies

Why are you asking about the menopause?

When you reach the menopause, your ovaries stop producing as much of the hormone oestrogen. Oestrogen helps to keep bones strong, so women lose bone more quickly for a few years around the time of the menopause.

For more information about bone health and the menopause, visit our website at theros.org.uk

Why are you asking about hormone replacement therapy (HRT)?

HRT can help to prevent bone loss and reduce your risk of developing osteoporosis and breaking bones while you're taking it.

For more information about bone health and HRT, visit our website at theros.org.uk

Why are you asking about my family history of hip fractures, not just my family history of osteoporosis?

A parent having osteoporosis will not, on its own, greatly increase your own risk of breaking bones. But if one of your parents has broken a hip, you have a much higher risk of breaking a bone too - particularly if your parent was younger than around 70 when they broke their hip.

This is likely to be due to certain genes that are passed down from your parents that affect your bone strength.

How can I feed back about the osteoporosis risk checker?

We welcome feedback about our osteoporosis risk checker. This can be provided by emailing riskchecker@theros.org.uk or calling 01761 473142.

Do you plan to update the osteoporosis risk checker?

We will consider user feedback and may plan to develop the tool further. The content will be reviewed regularly as part of the standard review cycle for all our public-facing, evidence-based health information.